

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 07260 201802Z

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3323

S E C R E T MADRID 7260

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DEPARTMENT PASS AS APPROPRIATE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PFOR, SP, US, SS, MO

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA

REF: STATE 248533

1. I SAW FONMIN CORTINA AT NOON TODAY AND CONVEYED TO HIM THE POINTS SET FORTH IN REFTEL. I ALSO INFORMED HIM IN GENERAL TERMS OF OUR APPROACH TO KING HASSAN AND THAT WE IN TOUCH WITH WALDHEIM TO URGE THAT DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES BE EXPLORED IN ORDER TO ATTAIN A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AND PEACEFUL SOLUTION IN THE SAHARA.

2. THE MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR WAS LEAVING CORTINA'S OFFICE JUST AS I WENT IN AND CORTINA TOLD ME THAT HE HAD MET FOR OVER AN HOUR WITH THE AMBASSADOR IN ORDER TO STRESS THE DESIRE OF SPAIN TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION SO THAT IT MIGHT LEAVE THE SAHARA AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE IN PEACE AND WITH HONOR. CORTINA TOLD ME THAT OUR VIEWS WHICH I HAD SET FORTH ENTIRELY COINCIDED WITH THOSE OF THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND THAT HE WOULD REINFORCE HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO AMBASSADOR DE PINIES TO FOLLOW A MODERATE LINE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MADRID 07260 201802Z

EM CORTINA SAID IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION FROM HIS TALKS

WITH THE MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR THAT THE MOROCCANS WERE SOMEWHAT STARTLED BY THE ICJ DECISION, THE UN COMMITTEE REPORT, AND BY THE CALLING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING AND WERE BEGINNING TO REALIZE THAT THEY HAD CREATED A VERY DIFFICULT POSITION FOR THEMSELVES. HE THOUGHT THERE WAS SOME POSSIBILITY THAT THE MOROCCANS MIGHT NOW SEEK WAYS TO USE THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING AS A WAY OUT OF THEIR PRESENT SITUATION. CORTINA MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF A FURTHER UN INQUIRY COMMITTEE WHICH MIGHT GIVE THE MOROCCANS A WAY OUT OF GOING FORWARD WITH THE "PEACEFUL MARCH."

4. CORTINA RECALLED THAT WHEN HE LAST SAW THE SECRETARY IN WASHINGTON, THE SECRETACY HAD URGED SPAIN TO NEGOTIATE WITH MOROCCO. SPAIN HAS MADE EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN BILATERAL CONTACT WITH THE MOROCCANS IN THE HOPE OF FINDING AN ACCEPTABLE FORMULA, BUT ONE WHICH ALSO TOOK ACCOUNT OF THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS. SPAIN COULD NOT MAKE A DEAL WITH MOROCCO WHICH SIMPLY TURNED OVER THE SAHARA TO MOROCCO AND ALSO IN PART TO MAURITANIA.

5. CORTINA TOLD ME THAT WITHIN THE PAST TWO WEEKS FRANCO HAD SENT A SPECIAL EMISSARY TO KING HASSAN WITH A PERSONAL MESSAGE WHICH WAS COUCHED IN A FRIENDLY AND CONCILIATORY MANNER AND WHICH WAS DESIGNED TO SHOW SPANISH DESIRE TO WORK OUT THE SAHARA QUESTION IN A WAY WHICH WOULD MAKE POSSIBLE CONTINUING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SPAIN AND MOROCCO. THE EMISSARY HAD BROUGHT BACK TO FRANCO HASSAN'S REPLY WHICH INDICATED MOROCCO WAS DISPOSED TO MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH SPAIN, BUT MADE NO CONCRETE PROPOSALS. THE ONLY PROPOSALS MOROCCO HAS MADE TO DATE IS THAT SPAIN SHOULD TURN OVER THE SAHARA AND THIS, CORTINA REPEATED, SPAIN COULD NEVER ACCEPT. CORTINA REPEATED WHAT HE HAD SAID IN WASHINGTON WITH REGARD TO SELF-DETERMINATION. IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE SAHARA HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES, HOWEVER, ALL OPTIONS AS TO HOW THE REFERENDUM MIGHT COME OUT WERE ENTIRELY OPEN AND INDEED SPAIN FULLY ACCEPTED

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MADRID 07260 201802Z

THAT SAHARAN REFUGEES SHOULD BE CONSULTED. ALGERIA DOES NOT WANT THE SAHARA TO BE TURNED OVER TO THE MOROCCANS, BUT IF IT COULD BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE REFERENDUM HAD BEEN FAIRLY CONDUCTED, THEN THE ALGERIAN ATTITUDE SHOULD BE MANAGABLE.

6. COMLINA DID EXPRESS SOME CONCERN ABOUT THE FRENCH ATTITUDE. HE WAS INCLINED TO THINK THAT

WITH GREATER INFLUENCE IN MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA
THE FRENCH WERE SUPPORTING THEIR CLAIMS AS AGAINST
ALGERIA. WHILE HE DID NOT SAY SO, HE GAVE THE IMPRESSION
THAT HE WAS AFRAID THAT THE FRENCH MIGHT NOT PLAY
A HELPFUL ROLE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

7. FINALLY, CORTINA EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT WE WOULD
CONTINUE TO DO EVERYTHING WE COULD TO PERSUADE THE
MOROCCWNS TO AVOID ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT BRING ABOUT
A CONFRONTATION. HE BELIEVED THAT THE US AND
SPANISH POSITIONS WERE NOW VERY MUCH THE SAME WITH
REGARD TO THE NEED TO KEEPING OPEN ALL POSSIBILITIES
OF A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. SPAIN WAS DETERMINED THAT THE
SAHARA AND ITS PHOSPHATES WERE NOT WORTH THE
DEATH OF A SINGLE SPANIARD. SPAIN IS DETERMINED TO
GET OUT AND THE ONLY THING THAT IS NECESSARY IS THAT
IT BE ENABLED TO DO SO REPIDLY, PEACEFULLY AND HONORABLY.
STABLER

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